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INFORMATION ABOUT HOME OCCUPATIONS CAN I OPERATE A BUSINESS IN MY HOME?

The Catawba County Unified Development Ordinance allows certain home businesses to be operated from your home. The definition of a home occupation is as follows:

“An accessory use of a dwelling unit which shall constitute, either entirely or partly, the livelihood of the person(s) living in the dwelling unit.”

Home Occupations are permitted in all of the residential districts of Catawba County’s Zoning Jurisdiction.

Home occupations shall be subject to the following limitations:

(a) Home occupations are permitted in all residential districts, provided that they meet the requirements of Subsections (b) and (c) below. Certain categories may be allowed including but not limited to:

- (1) Computer programming;
- (2) Cooking and baking;
- (3) Direct marketing enterprises;
- (4) Dressmaking, sewing and tailoring;
- (5) Hair salons – may include only nail salon and tanning bed(s) as accessory uses;
- (6) Home crafts, such as weaving, jewelry making, or potting;
- (7) Management of companies and enterprises;
- (8) Painting and sculpting;
- (9) Professional services (excluding health care professionals and massage therapists); technical services;
- (10) Real estate, rental or leasing;
- (11) Specialty trade offices, where services are provided off site;
- (12) Telephone answering service; and

- (13) Tutoring or instruction of no more than 4 students at a time.
- (b) No home occupation shall be permitted that:
 - (1) Changes the outside appearance of the dwelling unit or is visible from a street.
 - (2) Generates traffic, parking, sewage or water use in excess of that which is normal for a residential property.
 - (3) Creates a hazard to persons or property or is a nuisance. (Nuisance is defined as anything harmful or offensive to the community or a member of it and for which a legal remedy exists. Nuisances include excessive traffic, noise, odor, dust.)
- (c) The following standards shall apply:
 - (1) A maximum of 25% of the aggregate total of the usable floor area of the principal dwelling unit may be devoted to the home occupation. Accessory structures may not be used for business purposes.
 - (2) One non-illuminated sign is permitted, with a surface area not to exceed 4 square feet. The height, including the supporting structure shall not exceed 4 feet.
 - (3) Only one person shall work on the site of the home occupation, other than those residing on the property.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN OPENING A HOME BASED BUSINESS

- (1) Check to see if the proposed business is considered a home occupation.
- (2) If you plan on erecting a sign on your property for your home occupation, you must provide an 8 ½ x 11 inch or 8 ½ x 14 inch drawing, prepared to scale, showing the location of the sign and a scaled drawing of the proposed sign. You may obtain a copy of a map of your property from Catawba County's Geographic Information System at our Internet web site at: www.gis.catawba.nc.us
- (3) Obtain a Zoning Authorization Permit for a Home Occupation and a sign permit.
- (4) Obtain an Authorization to Construct (septic tank permit) and well permit, if applicable.
- (5) Obtain the appropriate building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits from Catawba County Building Inspection.
- (6) Contact the Building Inspectors regarding inspections.